

Explorations Into Television Journalism

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

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June 23, 1992

Graduation: July 23, 1992

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This thesis was originally intended to be a diary of what goes on within the world of big-time television journalism. I was hoping it would result in a greater understanding and realization of what the industry itself would offer to me, both in completion of my long term and short term goals. The discussion delves into what happens during the course of certain days/weeks of my last semester of college and my tenure at KRDO-13 television in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Not only did it open my eyes to the intricacies of the industry, but also to the complicated aspects of human nature itself. I left the overall outcome of my internship open, for not even I knew what was in store for me. However, though it didn't prove to be the most enjoyable of experiences, I can truly say that it was one of the most educating experiences of my college career.

1/10/92:

Act I, Scene I:

Picture a young and impressionable college senior about to embark upon a journey into the unknown. Our hero, about 6'2", 175 lbs. enters the "adult arena" with aspirations of grandeur and lofty expectations. He is a telecommunications major with an interest in news-gathering and his last academic requirement isn't some class, nor is it an exam. No, the last obstacle Terry Miller has to overcome is the dreaded internship. Just the mere mention of the word strikes fear into the heart of every communications major. There seems so much to learn.

Perhaps I have glamorized the experience for the sake of this thesis, but I am not too far off. I left school thinking that everything I learned at college will serve me in good stead after I graduate or during my internship. How wrong I was. School cannot even begin to give a student an idea of how the "real world" is beyond those hallowed walls.

My first decision to do an internship was influenced by school itself. I didn't want another semester of actual classes, and since all of my friends strongly suggested that I do an internship, I thought that would be the right way to go. So far, my decision has been a good one. The next question I asked myself was, "Where do I travel to go on my internship?" At first, my decision was to go to Tucson, Arizona, mainly because I liked the area and it isn't nearly as cold down there as Indiana is during the winter. As a matter of fact, it could be considered downright tropical in comparison! However, my thoughts changed

drastically when I examined my pocketbook and found absolutely nothing. Therefore, my thinking quickly became diverted to the age-old college standby...home. And since my parents were willing to house me for this, my last semester of school, the logical choice presented itself: Colorado Springs. Colorado was the place for me.

Next, a choice must be made as to which of the three main television stations should I work for; KRDO, KKTU or KOAA. A tough decision lay ahead. However, through thorough examination and scientific processes, I finally arrived at a decision. I liked watching KRDO, so I decided that was the one for me.

ACT 1. SCENE II: January 7, 1992: The First Day on the Job:

Yikes...doomsday has arrived. The big meeting with the news director for KRDO, Paul Unwin, was scheduled for 9:00 o'clock in the morning. Hmmm...How was a college kid supposed to go about making a good impression? Should I wear my cut-offs with long underwear hanging out like the Colorado College kids, or should I wear a double-breasted suit? I finally decided to go just as I would if I were going to classes at Ball State. Jeans, nice shirt and penny loafers. That ought to do the trick, and do the trick it did. Upon walking into the station for the first time, I was struck as to how small it actually was. I had all these lofty impressions of stations and figured they were huge buildings with marble floors and gold fixtures. It was rather like seeing your elementary school teachers outside the classroom for the first time...I couldn't believe what I was seeing.

The news department was downstairs from all the upper

management offices. and I suppose that is to keep the grunts separated from the generals. Overall. I was quite impressed with the compact efficiency of the station. Mr. Unwin escorted me into his office and after a few brief pleasantries. we got down to business.

The first thing he said to me was that a job opening had become available and if I did my internship correctly and well. then the job would be mine after the internship was over. I was overjoyed. for steady employment was an almost unheard of thing to me a college student. He explained further that the job was a photo-journalist job. with duties to videotape stories and occasionally report them as well. Editing was a big factor in the job description. I was understandably excited at the prospect. and explained some of the things we had done in school. My Electronic News Gathering class apparently is the most important class I could use for this job (if only I would've paid more attention!). Ahem...anyway. the main duties I had were to mirror the other photojournalists and learn how to use their cameras. how to set up shots. and what sort of things are pleasing to the eye.

ACT I. SCENE III: That very day I went out on a couple of shoots with a photographer named Eric and we shot some video of a firechief interview. and then a feature story on a coin museum here in the Springs. Eric was really helpful in pointing out features of the camera. for the cameras they use at the station are completely different than the ones here at school. However. the basic concepts are still the same. and therefore I understood

what he was doing for the most part.

We then returned to the station to edit the fire chief interview for the 5:30 news. and Eric edited so fast it was hard for me to follow exactly what he was doing. These guys aren't really stressed out about anything. for Eric edited the piece about 30 minutes before it was supposed to go on.

A lot of the day however, between the two stories we videotaped, there was a lot of sitting around with no one doing anything. Apparently, in a market the size of Colorado Springs (450,000 including suburbs), there are some pretty slow days and there are some good news days. So, the photographers and reporters sat around watching game shows. or if the reporter is lucky, he/she has a package to put together and edit that all afternoon (such as the coin museum piece).

ACT I. SCENE VI: 01/08/92

This day started out with a meeting with Paul Unwin that took well over an hour and a half while he explained some of the intricacies of the equipment. and he explained different shots to use when filming a story. All this was pretty much a review for me, because basically the classes I took at BSU explained it all anyway. He had different terms for things that threw me at first. but after further query the knots untied and understanding was reached. At about 11:00 a.m., the chief photographer Dave took me on a shoot to interview a lady from the Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce about the increase in tourism in that town. Dave is easily the most helpful person I have met yet. He actually explained things to me as he was doing them. and then

allowed me to look through the viewfinder to show me his shot setup, and told me why he set things up in their particular fashion.

That shoot only took maybe an hour, and upon return to the studio Dave showed me a lot of his older stuff and explained shot selection there too. As we were viewing stuff on the editor, Deb (a reporter) told us that there was a fire that need to be covered (or at least examined) and we were it. We loaded up the car and went to the fire scene, but it was really nothing much, so we didn't shoot anything. Deb explained that reporters have to make a decision as to what is newsworthy and what's not. It's kind of morbid, but if there were flames shooting out of the windows or a death, then the fire would be worth covering. Seeing there was no "action", we went back to the station.

Later, at about 4:00 p.m., Dave was supposed to go out and tape the weather shots for the weather segment of the program, so I went with him and he let me film the weather spots. Of course, the spots were going to be used, but the weatherman already had stuff he wanted shown, and therefore my shots will have to wait for another day. How close to glory! Small accomplishments in a world of great achievements.

ACT I. SCENE V: 01/09/92

This was the most unproductive day yet. I met this other photojournalist (Pete) and he's kind of a jerk. I went on a shoot with him, and he never said word one to me. Most of the day I was bored out of my skull, for sitting and watching television isn't exactly my idea of an internship, but tomorrow I

will ask for access to my own camera (the old tube type), and film some of my own stuff to get some hands-on experience. I've met most of the anchors and reporters and even though they're pretty cocky, they seem to be a pretty nice bunch.

ACT I, SCENE VI: 01/14/92

Seeing as I was supposed to work on Saturday but had misunderstood the time I was to come in, January 11th was a day off for me (as well as Sunday and Monday, for those are my two regular days off...). However, on Tuesday I returned to work, and it turned out to be one of the best days I've had as of yet on my internship.

So far I've basically had no "real" experiences, other than simply going out with other reporters and photogs to see how they do their jobs. But today, things were different...

I first asked to have some raw footage of snowboarding in Monarch, Colo. to practice editing on the machines. Dave, the chief photographer, also dubbed some music for me, so I spent the whole morning editing my own "musical package" and it didn't turn out too bad. Later, (after reading magazines all afternoon), I was asked if I wanted to edit a VO-SOT (Voice-Over, Sound On Tape) and just a VO for the 5:30 news. Well, I jumped at the chance and it turned out pretty good (except the next morning I was informed that there was one "flash edit", which is a really quick edit or a frame between edits). Overall, the day was very productive.

ACT I, SCENE VII: 01/19/92

Last night, a Friday night, I was sitting around the station being bored and waiting for something to happen, when my career started. Friday nights are hot sports nights, and the sports guys all had high school basketball games to cover. And this night the Colorado College Tigers hockey team was taking on rival North Dakota State Sioux, and the sports team was getting strung out. Therefore, seeing as I was waiting for this opportunity, I suggested that even though the station wouldn't let me drive their cars, perhaps I could take some equipment and someone could drop me off at the Broadmoor World Ice Arena to tape the game. Brian Jerman (the sports anchor/director) was at first leery, for the CC hockey game was the lead story that night on the news. But he relented, and I filmed the whole game and edited it when I got back to the station. In addition, I was instructed to set up a "live shot" from the sports office downstairs in the station, and did that as well. The story went off great as did the live shot, and Brian and Vince (the other sports anchor) invited me out with them for a beer. Wow, only the second week as an intern! Hey, I'm earning my keep!

The next day (Saturday) I edited a package for practice (a reporter Deb gave me her script and raw footage) and that turned out pretty good. Then later, Mark Austin (sports reporter) needed to go out on a shoot about baseball trading cards and needed a photographer, and the logical choice was...you know who! I also videotaped the Air Force Academy vs. UCCS women's basketball game for the 5:30 news. All in all, more of my stuff got on the news this weekend than all the other regular photogs!

If things keep progressing like they are, this internship will prove to be pretty exciting. Not to mention the fact that Paul Unwin, the news director, wants me to take home scripts and practice reading them so that when the time comes for me to be on the air, I'll be somewhat ready. To be continued...

ACT I, SCENE VIII: 01/24/92

Things have been somewhat boring around the station this past week, partly due to the fact that there's not much news occurring, and also because that no one has really given "the intern" a second thought. However, two days ago Paul Unwin asked me as I was leaving the studio if I wanted to report a story on the 23rd of January. Naturally, I was pretty excited (even though the story itself was a "grunt" story, or one that the station didn't care too much about). Not to mention the fact that I had to wake up earlier than usual, and drive with a photographer to Denver to cover the story. However, all these things put aside, the opportunity had finally arisen, and I wasn't about to complain about it (until later). So Eric (the photographer) and I went up to Denver to cover a press conference that General Studds, a Marine recruiter, was holding. Except for a military reporter from the Denver Post, we were the only media folks there. And throughout the press conference, I was the only one asking questions! The other reporter just sat there and took notes, while I asked the questions! Perhaps that's how press reporters handle the conferences, so I wasn't mad at all. Contrary to the fact, I was happy with the way I handled things. The Sarge in charge asked Eric and I later if we would be

interested in going to San Diego to do a story on the Marine Boot Camp there. Of course we said yes, but I am not counting on it. In any case, Eric and I wasted some time in Denver for a little while, and then returned to Colorado Springs. I showed Paul the rough footage and he then asked me if I wanted to write the story. I said yes, but wanted to know the angle the station wanted to take in regard to it. He said, "You tell me..." and so I wrote and edited my version of the story and took it to Paul. He said overall I was correct, but certain changes had to be made (like my lead sentence, for example, stated a different angle that Paul wanted. Talk about strange...he asks me to come up with an angle and then he comes up with his own which could have saved me a lot of writing time). I rewrote the story, and edited it again. However, KRDO gets a lot of its footage from a national feed, and we asked them to send us some Marine footage. What we got in return was ten seconds of guys doing pull-ups. Hmmm...I had to make the best of what I was given, so I winged it. I then took my script to the anchor, Carla Siegel, and she was going to then re-write it (the anchors always do that, to fit their own style). Carla re-wrote it the way I basically did on my original script, and I told her that Paul said that wasn't the way he wanted it to go. She said, "Well, I'll put it on the air and then I'll deal with him." It was at that moment that I realized that Paul Unwin doesn't exactly have a very favorable following at this station. But what can I do. I'm only an intern! Therefore, later that night, on the 10:00 news there was the first story I ever covered for a station, and they re-edited

the first part of it with better Marine footage. Such is life in the big city. but overall it came across pretty cool.

Today. I'll go in and see how the aftermath comes around. Tonight, I'm going to cover some more hockey. and CC plays #2 Minnesota. so it's a big story. Much, much more later...Stay tuned.

ACT II. SCENE I: 01/31/92

Well, time has come for the second act to begin (which essentially means the second month). A lot has happened this past week that really needs to be put down in this journal.

First of all, last Saturday, January 25th. was supposed to be a pretty good day for me on my internship. I went in to the station and was informed that I would be covering my own stuff today (for the most part). KRDO only has one photographer and one reporter during weekend days. and with me being there, it's supposed to help out with the "action." Alexa. the one reporter. and Thomash. the photog. and I were supposed to cover a story out at the Air Force Academy. and then Alexa and I were going to go out and cover more stories. Well. first off. there wasn't enough equipment to go around. All the other photogs took their equipment and we didn't have enough for us. Then. to make matters worse. we didn't have the keys for any of the mobile units. Therefore. all three of us were going to have to cover one story. Once we got out to AFA. Thomash took so long shooting that we had to skip a couple of stories because he wasted so much time out there. Upon arrival back at the station. we found out that some of the equipment was bogus. and that didn't make

matters any better. I was always under the assumption that CCD cameras were almost indestructible, but that is far from the truth. So for most of the day, I sat around the station, reading newspapers, and thinking about how disorganized this station really is (more on this concept later...).

A few days later, on the 29th, I was out with Dave (the chief photographer), and he let me shoot my first press conference regarding the American Heart Association. He gave instructions as far as to what to shoot, how long to hold the shot, and so forth. All in all it went pretty well. Then later, he, Curt Goff (weekend anchor), and I went out to cover another press conference, and on the way back I was told some very interesting information regarding KRDO.

It seems that Paul Unwin, my superior, isn't looked upon with a whole lot of respect at the station. Not only Dave and Curt, but the rest of the staff of reporters and photogs feel as though Paul is over his quota of "butt-kissing" with the management. They resent the fact that he doesn't tell them the truth about stories that don't mean too much. In other words, he sends us on stories that the owner wants, and then lies to us about the importance of the stories. They want some simple honesty and respect from the guy. In addition, they say he should get a backbone and tell the owner that some stories aren't as important as other ones we could be covering. I am not embellishing, for every day I hear new complaints about Mr. Unwin. I predict he won't last more than another year.

Yesterday, January 30th, was easily my most interesting day

yet on this internship. It seems as though college can only prepare you so far for experiences that happen to you in every day life. Yesterday I was "baptized" into the real world of photojournalism, and what a baptism it was!

I got to work, and Mark (the assignment editor) asked me if I wouldn't want to go shoot a really simple story for him. I said that. yes. I would. but someone else must drive to comply with station policy. Curt Goff said he would. so we were to get some simple video of a telephone crew from U.S. West digging up some phone lines. When we got there, Curt Said he would stay in the car while I go and get my footage. I went up to the crew digging and asked if they wouldn't mind if I got some footage of them to put on the news that night at 5:30. The foreman said really rudely, "I'd rather you didn't." I stood there for a moment (this was a situation I wasn't prepared for) contemplated this new development, and then went back to the car and told Curt what had happened. Well. needless to say, Curt was more than a little pissed, and he walked up to the foreman and asked the same question I did. The foreman got really hostile and said, "It's like I told your cameraman there...I don't want you taking pictures here." Curt asked him why, and the guy gave us a cock-and-bull story of how we broke through the barricades and violated the law. Curt and the guy exchanged some more "pleasantries" and the guy threatened to call the police on us. We beat him to the punch and called the police ourselves, and U.S. West Communications and received clearance from them both. While we were doing all this, a pizza delivery car rolled up and

delivered pizza to the workers! (And it was us that broke through the barriers!) When I got back over to get footage of these guys working, the foreman instructed the workers out of the hole and stop working. Therefore all I got footage of was the trucks and the hole itself. Curt and I were laughing all the way back. I showed the footage to Paul Unwin, and Curt and I wanted to show the guys eating pizza to make them look bad, but Paul wouldn't let us. He said, "We don't want to look like assholes." Curt and I were a little mad, but I edited the "pizza guys" out for the newscast. What a bummer, but yet what an experience! Curt said he wasn't surprised by Paul's reaction, because he said that Paul doesn't have a backbone. Another example of friction between the reporters and the management.

Later that day I reported a story about the opening of the 50th Space Wing at Falcon Air Force Base, and that turned out very well. I was complimented by the folks out there for my professionalism and quality questions, while the other reporters (who have been in this business for a while) were lax in their duties.

Tonight I will tape more CC hockey, and tomorrow perhaps I will get a chance to go on my own shoots again. Like any good soap opera, this saga is to be continued....

ACT II, SCENE II: 02/07/92

As you can probably tell by now, my journal entries are being written with more time in between them, and that's due to the fact that I've been pretty busy at work (internship) and when I come home I'm too tired to write in it. However, every week I

will give a synopsis of what went on the previous week in hopes that I will somehow analyze the semester for better or for worse.

I truly believe that space aliens have come down and invaded KRDO-TV and have taken over the upper management positions.

The CC hockey games are my "beat", and every week it seems that my footage gets better and better. Last Friday, the Tigers took on St. Cloud State College in Minnesota, and again I found myself in the Broadmoor Arena getting footage. However, this time I had to take my own vehicle due to the fact that all the other mobiles were gone and we needed it covered (not to mention that I and other fellow co-workers are getting irritated that I'm not on the station insurance policy, so I'm having to bum rides off of the closest reporter). In any case, I went out with my gear and shot the game, then zipped back to the station where I had to quickly put together a VO and give it to Brian Jerman (the sports anchor) so he could write his script for it. A hectic night back at the station, but it turned out very well. Everyone complimented me on the footage saying it was the best they've seen of hockey in a long time. That's why it's my "beat!"

On Saturday, Mark Austin (the third sports reporter) and I went to the Air Force Academy to cover a college wrestling tourney, and I got excellent footage of that too. Mark not only did a story on the event itself, but an "athlete of the week" package on one of the wrestlers. I will use the footage to put on my resume' tape. I showed it to the news director (Paul Unwin) and he said overall it was good but there were a few things wrong with it. In other words, he butchered my piece

frame by frame. I later showed it to some of the other photogs, and they said it was great and not to worry about it at all. Hmm...it seems as though another notch on the slate of Unwin's record has been added. Oh well...

On Tuesday, Curt Goff and I went out to cover an event out at Widefield High School that promoted "buckling up." A small but meaningful story was put together with my footage and I edited it for the 10:00 news. Plus, that night the wrestling footage came on, so again I had more things on the news that night than anyone else. Things are looking up.

Wednesday, February 5th, was national letter of intent signing day, when all the prospective college football teams sign their top recruits. In other words, it was a big day for the sports department. I went out with the sports guys later in the afternoon to cover some of the signing, and then later came back and edited some of it together. The weekend sports anchor Vince Greco told me later that he highly recommended to both Brian Jerman and Mark Rosenberg (the assignment editor) to hire me after my internship is over because of the quality that my work has been. A very positive sign.

Yesterday was boring until the afternoon. I went out with Curt Goff (the weekend anchor) and shot some footage of ITT Corporation to do a story on a big contract they're getting from the government. I had that story edited by 2:00 in the afternoon, and then nothing to do for the rest of the afternoon.

Mark Austin asked if I would like to go out and tape the coach of CC hockey for a package he was putting together. Of

course I said yes, even though it was after the time I was to get off work. The shooting in the Air Force Academy Field House was just short of maddening, due to the fact that the Fresnel light on the camera kept dimming (due to lack of battery power) and thus I had to iris for the lights from the roof and off of the ice. All this created havoc with the white balance on the camera, and thus when I took the footage back to the station, it came out somewhat blue. I felt really bad for Mark, but he said it was o.k. and that he could fiddle with the editor and fix it enough so it could go on the air. Everyone said those things happen, especially when there was no light, but I still felt pretty bad. Oh well, it happens to everyone, and I'm surprised it didn't happen to me earlier.

Tonight I will go and cover the CC hockey game, and again, my footage will be great (a touch of cockiness here).

Now on to more political and relevant issues. The reason I mentioned the space alien thing at the start of this entry is because the management at this station is going from bad to worse. It seems as though everyone, reporters and photogs, are disgruntled with the way things are run and are looking elsewhere for jobs. Carla Siegel (the main co-anchor) has already given her notice and is leaving at the end of the month. This is a trend at this station that is worse than any other station in town. People come, get treated badly, and leave. They don't tell us in school that management in TV is horrible, and people go from station to station in hopes of finding the right one for them. Curt Goff, Dave Boersch (the chief photog), and others

are looking for different stations to work at. And things will get worse before it gets better. It seems as though the weekend co-anchor, Tamera Banks (who is the nicest person I have met at the station so far), is getting passed up for Carla's job because the station isn't promoting from within. Word around the office is that because Tamera is black, the owners don't want to promote her. As I understand it, they're somewhat racist. I guess they've been taken to court before on such charges, and now it seems that they will resurface again. Hmmm...I am seriously debating about whether or not to take a job here even if I am offered one. Yeah, it's a start, but am I willing to compromise the way I look at things for a suspicious news director?

ACT II, SCENE III: 02/14/92

Well, it can easily be said that this has been one of the strangest weeks of my internship. Mainly because, a lot of "bad" things have happened. I should be getting used to all this by now, but I suppose tolerance will only come with time.

For most of the time I really did nothing but sit around and watch television or read magazines. Tuesday was one of those days.

However, I was instructed to come in early on Wednesday because I was to cover some press conferences. To this I said great, due to the fact that I was bored, and if I was to cover leaves blowing in the wind I would have been excited.

The reporter Deb and I went out to this school for a check presentation, and all was going well except when the actual presentation took place, my deck ceased to roll and thus I got no

footage of the actual event. However, upon switching batteries, something must have been jarred back into place as the deck started rolling again. Well, by then it was too late, and I got the rest of the footage and went back to the station apologizing to Deb the whole way. She said these things happen, and all in all it turned out all right. Frustrating, but decent nevertheless. As it turns out, there was a short in the roll cable (we use 3/4" rather than BetaCam) and so engineering took care of it. But the real story occurred....yesterday.

As was usual in the morning I was sitting around doing nothing, when I was asked to help out on a shoot about "National Return a Shopping Cart Week." I should have known that my day was going to be frustrating right from the start. However, I was given the keys to this truck (which belonged to our director) and asked to drive around with this shopping cart in the back to a different location. Overall, a fairly easy thing to pre-occupy my morning and afternoon. Well, I got a call on the two-way radio in the station mobile, and was instructed to call the assignment editor on the phone at my convenience. We got to our final location, and I called. It seems as though my personal car, the one I drive to work every day (a '74 Saab for those of you playing at home...), got hit by a truck in the KRDO parking lot. Not a lot of damage, but enough. Well, as it turns out, it's not really my car, but it belonged to my mom's boss, who happens to be my lawyer! As all this was going on over the phone, the shoot was nearing an end, and I told the reporter and photographer I'll meet them back at the station. The story gets

even better from here. I mentioned before I left that wouldn't it be ironic to get pulled over for stealing a shopping cart on the way back. Well, at a stoplight I noticed that a policeman/state trooper was talking on his radio and motioning towards the truck I was driving. I made the turn and his lights came on and he pulled me over. It seems that the truck I was driving had expired plates! It wasn't mine! I told the officer, "Cut me some slack will you? My car got hit today and I'm only an intern at KRDO." No dice...Officer Friendly had already the ticket. So now I have to go to court on the 15th of April with the owner of the truck to try to clear it. Larry, the owner of the truck says he'll pay the ticket, and there were no points off of my license. What made it even funnier was that upon arrival at the station, Larry told me he had the stickers, but hadn't put them on yet. They were in the glove compartment...

Hmmmm...things are now just beginning to get interesting. Then, I get chewed out for two things: parking my car in the front lot (which was B.S.) and for driving a personal vehicle on a KRDO activity (i.e. I'm not covered under KRDO insurance). Then the story heats up. I was going to go home and cite a bad day, but another photog said he needed help during the live shot that night and asked if I couldn't go with him. Being so soft-hearted, I agreed, and did the live shot. However, at six o'clock (I was off at six), we received a call on the two-way indicating there had been a double homicide, and we were the closest to the scene. Well, there went my plans for the evening. So, I got home from a very traumatic day at 7:00 at night, went

out to dinner. and curled up and went to bed at 9:00. How was your day?

Well, it seems that my bad day made my fellow workers have mercy on me. for on Friday night I was allowed to go home early. and I managed to get Saturday off. This week should turn out to be pretty eventful. for my birthday is tomorrow (Feb. 18th for all of you who want to get me a late present...) and I have to go out during the evening to cover the high school state hockey tournament. I think I'll ask for next Saturday off as well. and therefore go to a volleyball tournament. We shall see...

ACT II. SCENE IV: 02/23/92

Working on my birthday didn't turn out to be quite that bad. It seems that my alma matter. Palmer High School was playing arch-rival Cheyenne Mountain High School for a berth in the state hockey finals to be held on Thursday of the same week. I arrived late, and ended up missing the first game (which was that one...) but taped the second game. All in all. that night turned out to be for the best. On Wednesday, I mostly sat around in the morning. but in the afternoon action broke out just as I was leaving for the day. It seems as though a huge resort was fully ablaze and was making enough news to use a special report to interrupt "Star Trek." (Now that's news!) In any case, I went home, but we had really good footage as my fellow photojournalists were the first ones on the scene (they actually beat the firemen there!). On Thursday night, I went on a live shoot before I went and covered the state hockey finals, and the shoot was from the resort site. I think everyone at the station

is getting used to having me around and really appreciate the help that I am supplying. I then went to cover the hockey, and that turned out even better than could be expected. Palmer won the game 9-2, and I got some excellent footage of the scores and then reported the game with some sound bites from the coach of Palmer. When I returned to the station, everyone was indeed impressed with the footage I did get, and they told me so. Brian Jerman, the sports anchor, told me that on Friday I would be doing a kind of musical tribute for Palmer to be on the news, and to pick out some inspirational music. Great news for me, indeed!

Well, when I got to work on Friday, Brian and the other anchor Vince helped me out with some specialized editing that I could never learn at school w/o the right class (i.e. slo-motion and still frame editing). I chose the Olympic Theme from a couple of years ago that Emerson, Lake, and Palmer did an instrumental for. Friday at 5:30, I made my news debut (meaning my name was mentioned) w/ Brian saying, "...and our own Terry Miller....". My package got high marks from not only the sports division, but also from the main anchors as well. Vince went as far as to go to the news director and ask them again to hire me after my internship is over (Paul replied that he's thinking about it...typical.). Well, that night I went to the CC hockey game, but only two of my hockey goals were shown on the highlights, as that night was a hot sports night in other areas. But all in all, this week has been a very good one for me, for it finally seems as though my actual worth is coming through, and people are noticing. On another note, my application for grad.

school was sent in too late for approval, mainly due to the fact that I never took the GRE tests. So if any seniors are reading this, you might want to take the time to take those tests if you're thinking of applying to grad. school.

Next week looks as though its going to be fairly uneventful. U.S. Boxing Trials are at the training center, but other than that, it looks a bit slow. As always, they'll be plenty more to follow. Adios!

ACT II. SCENE V: 03/02/92

The past week was as uneventful as I thought it was going to be. Sure the U.S. Boxing Trials were in town and that brought a lot of action for the sports office, but other than that...no...wait...I take that back. There was a lot of news this week, but I had very little to do with it. On Friday night however, the third sports guy and myself went to Canon City to cover the basketball districts that were going on there, and once we got there we learned that the equipment that we had was defective, for the cable that connected the deck to the camera was broken. We then got pissed, and had to go all the way to Pueblo to get a new cable. By then we had to go to cover the basketball there, and then set up for a live shot in the Pueblo bureau. Needless to say, I had quite an eventful night, the temperature hovered around 70 degrees, so we could travel with the windows wide open. That's something I could never do in February in Indiana. Well, by the time I got home it was close to midnight, and I was indeed exhausted. I sure hope I get hired considering all the free labor I'm giving this station.

Well, it's like this. This week doesn't prove event-filled either. It looks as though I might be doing a lot of grunt intern-type work like editing "Kids News" and other fun stuff. Oh well, it's better than sitting around watching "Geraldo" all the time (which for the most part, is all I've been doing lately).

ACT II. SCENE VI: 03/09/92

As of yet no word on whether or not I will be hired on after my internship is over. If I don't hear from management by the beginning of April, I think I will go to them and ask them what is the deal. After all, what do I have to lose? I am already compiling an impressive resume and air check tape, so soon I will start to send that out as well. It would be easy for me to make an air check for radio too and try to get on the airwaves as a DJ.

This past week I have been doing a lot of things on my own as a part of the photojournalist staff. For instance, Pikes Peak Hill Climb racer David Donner was at a local elementary school to reward some grade schoolers for their good reading habits, and I had to put together a VO for it. Then, the third sports reporter was doing a package on the "Athlete of the Week" which happened to be the entire AFA women's swim team. I was chosen as his photog, and together we went out and put together a pretty decent package for the 5:30 news. So that too will go on my air check. Finally, since CC hockey is almost over, my Friday nights are spent following the other sports guys around, watching them tape their stuff. This past Friday, Mark Austin and I were to go to

Boulder and Denver to tape some state basketball and some hockey. This was to be an all night experience for the both of us. Boulder first, which from the Springs is a 2 hour drive, to tape two high school basketball games, then to the Denver Coliseum for some more basketball. After that, off to the Denver University Ice Arena for some CC vs. DU hockey highlights, all before the 10:00 news. Almost the entire sports show on Friday night was made up of my highlights. I am certainly pulling my weight around there. It also seems that from here on out my Saturdays are free due to lack of equipment, and that means a three day weekend for Terry! Am I stoked about that? No. I'm seriously bummed...I wanted to work on Saturdays...NOT!

ACT II. SCENE VII: 03/20/92

O.K....so it's been quite a while since my last journal entry. My excuse can't exactly be one of, "I was too busy!" mainly because that's the last thing I was. Oh, sure, last week was busy because the high school state basketball pairings were underway, and CC hockey was on the way to St. Paul, Minnesota. But as far as news was concerned, it was a pretty slow week for me.

With the state basketball playoffs going on at McNichols Arena and at the Denver Coliseum, the sports office needed a bit of help in regard to taping. Well, I jumped and went with the sports guys during the evening to help them with their "beat". As I said in my past entry, a lot of the basketball footage used during the newscast was mine, and that made me feel pretty good. But now that that's over with, there wasn't a whole lot to do in

the afternoons.

Not to mention, my regular beat, CC hockey, was winding down as well. They took fourth in the WCHA (Western College Hockey Assoc.) and were on their way to St. Paul to play in the WCHA Final Four. We were supposed to send a photog along with them for a half-hour special, and all the sports guys were pulling for me to go (seeing as I was the only one who followed the team all year via camera...). However, Jeff Server was to go since he was an employee and I was only an intern. If I were hired, I would have been the first to go. Another turn of the dime in the industry.

Overall, the reason that there hasn't been an entry or two in the past two weeks is that I really haven't done anything that amounts to excitement or newsworthiness.

At the beginning of April, I will start to discuss my getting a job at KRDO with Paul Unwin. Hopes aren't very high for that happening, even though he sort of led me to believe that that's what would happen. I'm not the only one he has said things like that too, so I'm not counting on a job. I have compiled some of my stuff that has gotten on the air in the form of an air check, and have begun to send them out to stations in Louisiana, W. Virginia, and even Indiana!

I am also beginning to have doubts about the industry in general. I do like what I'm doing, and I feel good about it, but if I'm going to survive at all, I need to get on at a station that pays a little better or find another area that will allow me to support myself at least. Working for \$5 an hour for my first

job out of college isn't my idea of a good time. Some of the reporters at KRDO are making that! It seems to me that unless you really are into what you're doing in this business, better pay is a priority and you won't get it here. And Colorado Springs is even a top 100 market! As creative and talented as I think I am, it will take years to get to where I want to be in the industry, and I don't know if I'm willing to wait that long, especially considering the fact that I have countless amounts of student loans to pay off. At \$5 an hour, that could be a long and dangerous road.

"The Internship: The Final Act." 04/06/92

This will be my last installment of the semester, and let me tell you, it couldn't come at a better time.

The past couple of weeks have been the clincher as far as my choices for the future. I haven't really done anything at the station, just sitting around looking bored and looking up file footage for the rest of the reporters. I've gone on a couple of cool shoots, like getting to play basketball during the middle of the day for a production shoot, but that's about it. I can't say as though I didn't expect what all happened during the semester, but my hopes were a bit too high. And now it's time to figure out what I'll be doing after college graduation.

To sum up what exactly happened this semester would take a great deal of time and space, and to tell you how exactly it made me think and feel would be too much for the average layman to take (not to mention, the author!). I can say, however, that the overall learning experience was invaluable.

I might have made a mistake doing an internship in the first place, for career reasons. I had a "glamorized" view of the industry, thinking that all the reporters and anchors had it easy. Their jobs were what I was after. However, the common term that seems to apply to everyone is "politics talks, baby." No matter where you turned, there was always someone there that was going to put the screws into you. Nothing was ever right, and that was a problem. I'm not saying that it was a complete disaster, but I think my concept of the industry has changed for the worse. As I said in my last entry, the money is horrible. I'm really surprised that some of these people actually try to earn a living at doing this. For years some of these people work to try to get a "break" into the big time (i.e. Denver), but it never amounts to anything. They just stay at the same station, working for the same wages they had when they started. I've talked to a few people, and not one of the reporters in the news department makes more than \$24,000 a year. Even the anchors, who are supposed to be the glue that holds it all together, don't make much more than that! I'm not prepared for living in poverty for 5-7 years before I get my break. They told me at school that the pay was low, but I didn't think it was this low! I'd have to get a second job just to eat! It's not all about money either.

Bad management is commonplace in the television news industry, and everyone knows it. However, at KRDO we've taken bad management to a new level of being. I have yet to meet someone at the station that can say anything good about the upper management, or even have a day without complaining about some

form of unfair treatment. I couldn't imagine going to work every day, constantly getting badgered for doing something that I thought was right, when all along it wasn't "the way we (management) want it done." Not only do the employees feel that the management is bad, but the public also knows this. I have friends that know the owner and his family, and talk about how they are complete idiots when it comes to running that station.

It's no wonder that during the past few months, KRDO is dead last in all time slots for the news. Our news director is trying to pin the blame upon our staff of reporters and anchors, saying they're not doing their jobs well enough. However, evidence points in the direction of upper management and their choice of stories they want covered and aired. Our news looks like a circus with a bunch of riff-raff subjects put upon it. The staff of reporters and photographers are some of the best in the market, but they are not allowed to exercise their creative freedom to go to the more important stories. They are simply puppets under the direction of poor management. A sad scenario indeed.

However, what I didn't learn about the industry itself, I learned about human nature. Never in my life have I met such a diverse group of individuals who have come together to try to do the best newscast possible. These people work so hard for peanuts, but their hopes for advancement remain high. For the most part, they all were very supportive of my efforts, and tried to keep me interested in what I was doing.

My options for employment after graduation are wide open.

The first thing I am trying to do is to take the Air Force Officers Qualifying Test to try to gain admittance into the AF as an officer. Then, I will go on to get my masters degree, and hope for the best. Further study into communications will do me some good. I also sent resume tapes to stations around the country, and am getting responses from them already. I'd like to get a job in the Air Force at the Strategic Defense Center here in Colorado Springs as a communications person, but I still have to go back for more schooling.

The best advice I can give to anyone going into the industry is to develop some serious patience. God knows, if you end up going to a station like KRDO, you're going to need all that you can get. And, don't go into the industry if you expect to make any money. I guarantee that you'll be waiting for at least 3-5 years before you will be able to support yourself w/o another job.

I'm not trying to be negative about my internship, quite the contrary. It's just that I set myself up for something that didn't develop, and that's the disappointing part. However, if you have the creativity, the patience, and the determination, ENG is for you. Hmmm.....